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News release

CANADA'S NEW GOVERNMENT TO LISTEN TO FARMERS WITH PLEBISCITE ON BARLEY

OTTAWA, Ontario, October 31, 2006 - The Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, announced today that a plebiscite will be held early in the new year on the marketing of barley.

"I believe farmers are prepared to express their views on how barley is marketed in Canada," said Minister Strahl. "Canada's New Government will consult with stakeholders, and I will develop a plebiscite question that will be clear and decided by a broad base of voters."

A task force report on implementing marketing choice, which was released Monday, recommended a four-stage transition from a Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) with monopoly powers to a marketing choice environment. The report concluded that a new CWB, owned by farmers, could thrive and create value without monopoly selling powers for wheat and barley.

"The task force suggests a phased-in transition and I agree," said Minister Strahl. "The report recommends legislation as the first step, but I'm recommending consultation. A plebiscite is a very important way of consulting."

Minister Strahl said, "Canada's New Government is committed to moving forward in providing marketing choice to western grain farmers, allowing them to maximize their returns, while continuing to preserve a strong CWB."

For more information on marketing choice, please visit www.agr.gc.ca/cwb.

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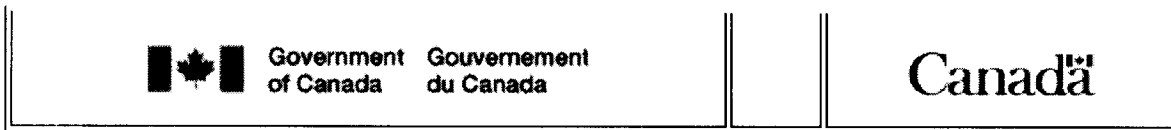
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